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# JASTROW'S HAYYŪĠ, THE WEAK AND GEMINATIVE VERBS IN HEBREW.<sup>1</sup>

The much-abused epithet "epoch-making" may be applied with strict propriety to the little treatises of Ḥayyūj on the Hebrew verbs containing weak consonants and on verbs whose second and third radical consonants are alike. His discovery that every Hebrew root normally consists of three consonants, and his acute explanation of the many apparent exceptions to this law by reference to the changes which the weak consonants undergo and to the contraction of repeated consonants, opened the way to a rational development of Hebrew grammar and lexicography. How revolutionary this theory was may best be seen by comparing Ḥayyūj's treatment of the weak verbs with that of his teacher, Menaḥem ben Sarūq, whose principle was that only those consonants in any word are radical which never disappear in the course of derivation or inflection. In Menaḥem's Lexicon, consequently, many roots of two, and even of one, consonant appear;<sup>2</sup> words which have no etymological connection are thus brought together, and derivatives of the same root separated. Under the root כ, for example, Menaḥem includes כִּי, כִּיָּה, כִּיָּה, כִּיָּה (Hiphil of כָּה), and the adverb כֹּה, while the adjective כָּה appears in its alphabetical place. Much more serious was the confusion which pervaded the whole field of inflection and gave rise to such monstrous misformations as Ḥayyūj animadverts upon in the first pages of his book on the Weak Verbs. Some modern scholars dispute the soundness of the theory of trilateral roots, maintaining that the so-called כִּי, כִּיָּה, and כִּיָּה are historically monosyllabic stems. But if this should be established, it would not detract from the merit of Ḥayyūj; for the analogy of dissyllabic roots has worked so extensively in these classes of words, not only in the massoretic text but in the living language itself, that the way he took was the only one which the empirical grammarian could take, and the only way in which scientific grammar could make its first step.

In the introduction to his book on the Weak Verbs Ḥayyūj discusses lucidly and with penetrating insight many points in Hebrew grammar and orthography: letters with and without vowels, the vowels, the pronunciation of the reduced vowel (שְׁבָא), the weak consonants (אָ"י and, at the end of words, הָ), and the use of these letters as the indices of long vowels, the allowed omission of these indices in writing, assimilation and crasis, the double pronunciation of the stopped consonants (כָּפ"ת), interchange of אָ"י and אָ"י in speech and in writing. To the section on verbs beginning with א is prefixed a classification of the simple and derived stems which was original with Ḥayyūj, and remarks on the irregularities

<sup>1</sup> THE WEAK AND GEMINATIVE VERBS IN HEBREW. By Abū Zakariyyā Yaḥyā ibn Dāwud of Fez, known as Ḥayyūġ. The Arabic text now published for the first time, by Morris Jastrow, Jr., Ph.D., Professor of the Semitic Languages at the University of Pennsylvania. Leyden: E. J. Brill's Successors, 1897. lxxxv + 271 pp.; 8vo.

<sup>2</sup> This feature of Menaḥem's system was rejected before Ḥayyūj by Menaḥem's severe critic, Dūnash b. Labrāṭ.

of the נ"ע verbs; and at the beginning of the section on the "ע the peculiarities of this class, especially in Niphal and Hiphil, are discussed. Similarly the second chapter, on verbs with a weak middle radical, opens with a full and clear explanation of the formation of the several tenses and stems; and the third chapter treats in the same way the verbs with a weak third radical, those which have both their first and third radicals weak, and those whose first radical is ך and the last weak. A corresponding introduction is prefixed to the book on verbs whose second and third consonants are alike. Besides these more formal and extended discussions, many acute grammatical observations are scattered through the articles on particular roots. It would have added greatly to the value of the edition if Professor Jastrow had furnished it with a grammatical index.

The treatises before us are of interest in another way. The express testimony of Parhōn,<sup>3</sup> abundantly corroborated by internal evidence, proves that Ḥayyūj was led to his theory and equipped for the task of developing and applying it by a study of Arabic grammar. The terminology which he employed was in the main that of the Arab grammarians.<sup>4</sup> Through translations of the works of Ḥayyūj and his successors this terminology established itself in the use of Jewish grammarians who wrote in Hebrew; from them, in Latin rendering often absurdly literal,<sup>5</sup> it passed over to the Christian Hebraists of the sixteenth century; and thence into the modern languages of Europe. The outlandish jargon which is still used in our Hebrew grammars to describe the simplest orthographic or phonetic phenomena, with its "shewa mobile" and its "quiescent" letters—a jargon which seems to have contracted some of the inviolability of the sacred tongue, so that few are bold enough to discard it—is, at the end of this long migration, the technical terminology of the Arab philologists as applied by Ḥayyūj to Hebrew.

Ḥayyūj was fortunate in his great successor, Abulwalid, who in numerous writings defended the new system, supplemented the deficiencies of his predecessor's works, and corrected their mistakes. It was largely through his efforts that the theory of triliteral roots prevailed and Hebrew philology was put on a solid foundation.

The treatises of Ḥayyūj on verbs with weak and doubled letters were early translated into Hebrew, first, near the end of the eleventh century, by Moses b. Jiqatilla, and somewhat later (*ca.* 1140) by Abraham b. Ezra. Ibn Ezra's translation was published by Leopold Dukes in 1844, from a manuscript in Munich. The editor assures us that he has printed the text of the manuscript with a fidelity so scrupulous as to respect even its palpable errors. Errors—not all chargeable to the scribe—are certainly numerous enough, and there are some considerable lacunæ. The

<sup>3</sup> Lexicon, s. v. פֶּרֶךְ, ed. Stern, 1844, fol. 54d. See also Abulwalid, quoted by Peritz, ZATW., Vol. XIII, p. 170, note 1 (= *Luma'*, ed. Derenbourg, p. 8, ll. 2 *sqq.*), with special reference to the resemblances between Arabic and Hebrew in the weak roots.

<sup>4</sup> See W. Bacher, *Die grammatische Terminologie des Jehūdā b. Dāwīd . . . Ḥayyūj*, 1882. Bacher has there investigated also the use of these terms by Jewish scholars before Ḥayyūj.

<sup>5</sup> See for illustration the Latin translation of De Balmis' מִקְנֵה אֲבִירָה, Venice, 1523.

translation is such as might be expected of an independent scholar like Ibn Ezra—faithful, but not bound to the letter, terse in style, and more consistent in terminology than that of his predecessor. Ibn Jiqatilla, whose version was edited by J. W. Nutt in 1870 from two manuscripts in the Bodleian, is much more diffuse; the author evidently feels constantly the difficulty, which he describes in the preface, of conveying the meaning of Ḥayyūj's Arabic technical terms in a language in which there was no established equivalent for them, and tries to overcome it by varied and alternative renderings and by explanatory glosses. But, beside this, there are large additions of a more material kind, in part from the hand of the translator, in part probably later interpolations.<sup>6</sup>

An edition of the Arabic original, the want of which has long been felt—not the less since the publication of the minor grammatical writings of Abulwalid, almost all of which are directly connected with the works of Ḥayyūj—has for several years been expected from Professor Jastrow, and is now before us. In the preface a succinct account is given of Ḥayyūj's life and works, and a description of the materials available for this edition and the way in which they have been used. The text is based upon two manuscripts in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. The older (B), dated 1210 A. D., is said to be defective, having many gaps in the two treatises, but a more precise definition of these lacunæ is nowhere given. The younger but better of the two codices (A) was written in 1316. Besides these a fragment of eight leaves in the Royal Library in Berlin (C),<sup>7</sup> beginning on p. 169, last line, of Jastrow's edition, and extending to p. 179, l. 5;<sup>8</sup> and a larger fragment of eighteen leaves in the British Museum (D),<sup>9</sup> begins on p. 22, l. 2 from the bottom, of the published text, and breaks off on p. 37, l. 1; then after a long gap begins again on p. 139, l. 5, and goes to 149, l. 13.<sup>10</sup> In addition to the manuscripts of Ḥayyūj, the many and often extensive quotations in the works of Abulwalid, especially in the *Mustalḥiq* and in the *Risālat al-taqrib wal-tashīl*, the latter of which is in the form of a commentary on the book on Weak Verbs, are of exceptional importance. He was a younger contemporary and disciple of Ḥayyūj;<sup>11</sup> he had critically compared numerous copies of the master's writings, notes peculiar readings, and brands some widely current corruptions.<sup>12</sup> His testimony,

<sup>6</sup> See on this point the authors cited by Jastrow, Preface, p. viii, note 3, where for XIII, p. 76, read 176; for XV, pp. 132-7, read 133.

<sup>7</sup> Edited by Peritz, *ZATW.*, Vol. XIII, pp. 169 *sqq.*

<sup>8</sup> This is not indicated in the edition.

<sup>9</sup> Described by Jastrow, *Proceedings American Oriental Society*, October, 1888 (= *JAOS.*, Vol. XIV), pp. xxxviii-xl.

<sup>10</sup> The editor leaves the reader to ascertain this also from the note in *PAOS.*, where the limits of the two fragments of D are defined by comparison with the translations of Ibn Ezra and Ibn Jiqatilla (on p. xl, ll. 1 *sq.*, for p. 13, 16, read 13, l. 20).

<sup>11</sup> Whether he had had the personal instruction of Ḥayyūj is uncertain.

<sup>12</sup> See, e. g., *Mustalḥiq*, pp. 146, 158 (with the former compare the reading of F in Jastrow's apparatus, p. lxvi); *Risālat al-taqrib*, p. 273. The last passage is interesting because the corruption proves that the oldest manuscripts of Ḥayyūj were written in Hebrew characters.

therefore, where we can take it, is of very great weight. The Hebrew translations, finally, were made from manuscripts of the eleventh or twelfth century, and that of Ibn Ezra particularly is sometimes an important witness.

Professor Jastrow has constructed his text primarily upon the two Oxford manuscripts, A and B. In the very numerous differences between them in the quotations from the Old Testament he has uniformly given the preference to the manuscript containing the more copious illustrations (p. xx), most frequently A.<sup>13</sup> Of these variations no note is made. Of other variants, he has not thought it necessary to indicate any but really essential ones (p. xxi). The critical annotation is, in fact, very meager; in the first twenty-one pages no difference of reading is recorded, and in the whole book on Weak Verbs there is on the average one variant to two pages of text; C is cited four times, D not at all, Abulwalid (for a reading) once. A rapid comparison of the printed text with the passages commented on in Abulwalid's *Al-taqrib* shows that there are in the latter many variations of at least equal importance with those which have found a place in the editor's critical notes.

After the text was printed, Professor Jastrow received from Dr. Kokowzoff collations of two defective manuscripts in St. Petersburg (E, F), which to a considerable extent complement each other and contain most of the two treatises. The more complete of these (F) has also decidedly the better text, and presents some coincidences with Abulwalid which might repay closer examination. Besides these, the St. Petersburg library possesses a number—twenty-five at least—of smaller fragments of different manuscripts, which Dr. Kokowzoff also collated.<sup>14</sup> Professor Jastrow has appended a delectus of these collations to his edition (Introduction, pp. xxxi–lxxxv). With them he has included the corrections which a final comparison of the printed text with the English manuscripts showed to be necessary, and a few readings from Abulwalid. This supplementary apparatus is much fuller than the critical notes beneath the text. On pp. 1–20, on which no various reading is noted in the latter, F alone is cited in the appendix over a hundred times. Thus the anomalous condition exists that we are much better acquainted with the materials which were not used in the constitution of the text than with the sources on which it is based. It is to be regretted that, since this supplement became necessary, the editor did not include in it a corresponding selection of readings from the material which he had himself collected.

It must also be noted as a defect in the critical apparatus that there is no indication, either in the text or introduction, of the places in the writings of Abulwalid where passages from Ḥayyūj are quoted. The alphabetical arrangement of the *Mustalḥiq* renders this less necessary

<sup>13</sup> The soundness of this as a critical principle is questionable. Whether it is warranted in the particular case by the character of B we have no means of judging.

<sup>14</sup> Jastrow, Preface, pp. xxiii sqq.

for that work, but for the *Risālat al-taqrīb*, and still more for the quotations scattered through the other writings of Abulwalid, a system of references such as Derenbourg in his edition of Abulwalid's *Opuscles* has given to the treatises of Ḥayyūj would have been very useful.

A few minor observations may be added. Upon what authority is the name דָּאָוִד (Dā'ūd) transliterated on the title-page and elsewhere Dāwud? In the text, p. 8, דָּוִדִּיבֵר וַיִּשְׁבֵּר, the doubling of *yōd* is erroneous; p. 167, l. 4 from the bottom, the reference (1 Kings 21:15) is omitted. In the Preface, p. xvii, l. 8, read Deut. 14:1; p. xix, ll. 5, 16, for Seleucidian read Seleucidan; p. ix, for "*Ibn Khayyuj*" Sayce might plead the example of Bacher, who has had to confess the same sin. The printing of the volume seems in general to be very correct.

By this edition of Ḥayyūj Professor Jastrow has laid all students of Hebrew grammar under obligation, and I wish for my own part thus to convey to him my thanks and my congratulations.

GEORGE F. MOORE.

ANDOVER, MASS.,  
December 1, 1898.

### BLAU ON ANCIENT JEWISH MAGIC.<sup>1</sup>

The well-known scholar presents us here with an exhaustive study of Jewish magic during the first five centuries of the Christian era. A glance at the table of contents will show the wealth of material contained therein. It is the following: Preface, "The Spread of Magic among the Jews." The latter is subdivided into: spread of magic in biblical times, in talmudic times, persons that used it, the sources of Jewish magic. "Aims and Effects of Magic." This is subdivided into: harmful and beneficial magic. "Magic Agencies." This is subdivided into: the human word, amulets, their contents, two Græco-Jewish magic formulæ, mystical names of God, influence and warding off of magical beliefs, the evil eye, things of magical power and charms, etymological superstition.

A few linguistic remarks may accompany this notice. On p. 67, note 3, the author speaks of יָמִימִיָּא in the sense of "days" as an "*Unform.*" This is not so. The plural of יָמִיָּא occurs in Var. Lect. B. M. 28a. On the same page, note 5, he doubts the correctness of Raši's explanation of דָּנִי or דָּנָנִי as "be strong." This explanation is undoubtedly correct. The verb דָּנָן is Assyrian *danānu* "be strong." Since neither Raši nor his authorities knew Assyrian, this explanation could not be the result of etymologizing, but represents good tradition. The enigmatic שִׁיָּא, Sabb. 67a, with which the author does not know what to do (p. 76), is שִׁיָּא = שִׁיָּח, participle of שִׁיחַ, used with the force of an imperative. The 'Arūkh has for this form the precative perfect שִׁחַ. The difficult

<sup>1</sup> DAS ALTJÜDISCHE ZAUBERWESEN. Von Prof. Dr. Ludwig Blau. (Beilage zum 21. Jahresbericht der Landesrabbinienschule in Budapest.) Budapest; Strassburg: Karl J. Trübner, 1898. viii + 167 pp. M. 4.